

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII
TDC
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS

S E C R E T STATE 225329

EXDIS, MILITARY HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:MILI, PERP, TW, KS

SUBJECT:PRESS GUIDANCE ON PDM RELOCATION
CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD, JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE
REFERENCE: (A) TAIPEI 05798
(B) STATE 216384

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1. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE ON PERIODIC DEPOT MAINTENANCE
(PDM) IS FOR USE ON AN "IF-ASKED" BASIS ONLY. IT IS EM-
BARGOED UNTIL AMBASSADOR UNGER AND USAF CHIEF OF STAFF
GENERAL LEW ALLEN HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE
MATTER WITH PRESIDENT CHIANG AND THE ROK, RESPECTIVELY.
DECLASSIFY AT DISCRETION OF THE AMBASSADOR. TAIPEI PLEASE

INFORM OTHER ADDRESSEES AFTER AMBASSADOR SEES CCK.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

Q: IS IT TRUE THAT THE USAF IS CLOSING ITS CONTRACT MAINTENANCE FACILITY ON TAIWAN?

A: THE FACILITY YOU ARE REFERRING TO IS NOT A USAF FACILITY. A PRIVATE CONTRACTOR, AIR ASIA, IS DOING THE CONTRACT WORK FOR THE US GOVERNMENT. IT IS TRUE THAT WE ARE PHASING OUT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONTRACTS WITH AIR ASIA.

HOWEVER, AIR ASIA DOES NOT WORK EXCLUSIVELY FOR DOD. QUESTIONS ABOUT PLANS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE FACILITY SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO AIR ASIA.

Q: HOW LARGE IS THE CONTRACT AND WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

A: THERE ARE ACTUALLY TWO CONTRACTS. THE FIRST IS WITH AIR ASIA AND COVERS PROGRAMMED DEPOT MAINTENANCE ON USAF AND USN TACTICAL AIRCRAFT, PRIMARILY F-4S. DURING FY 78 THIS CONTRACT WAS FOR \$5.25 MILLION. THE SECOND CONTRACT INVOLVES CORROSION CONTROL WORK PERFORMED BY CHINA AIR LINES ON A VARIETY OF US AIRCRAFT. IN FY 78 THIS CONTRACT COVERED APPROXIMATELY \$420,000 IN WORK.

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Q: WHY IS THE US GOVERNMENT CONTRACT WITH AIR ASIA BEING PHASED OUT?

A: THE KOREANS ARE DEVELOPING A MAJOR MAINTENANCE FACILITY FOR THEIR F-4S. SINCE WE HAVE SEVERAL SQUADRONS OF F-4S IN KOREA AND JAPAN AND MOST OF THE MILITARY CONTRACT WORK BEING DONE BY AIR ASIA INVOLVES THE F-4, WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN ADVANTAGES IN TRANSFERRING OUR MAINTENANCE WORK FROM TAIWAN TO KOREA. FOR EXAMPLE, FERRY TIME WILL BE REDUCED.

Q: WILL THE DOD CONTRACTS WITH AIR ASIA AND CHINA AIR LINES BE EXTENDED AFTER THEY EXPIRE THIS FALL?

A: YES. THEY WILL BE EXTENDED AS NECESSARY TO FACILITATE THE PHASING-OUT PROCESS.

Q: ISN'T THIS ACTION A CLEAR SIGNAL THAT NORMALIZATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PRC IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER?

A: THE NORMALIZATION OF US DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IS A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY GOAL OF THIS ADMINISTRATION. ALL OUR ACTIONS, INCLUDING THIS, ARE CONSISTENT WITH OUR NORMALIZATION POLICY AND THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO TIMETABLE FOR NORMALIZATION.

Q: WHAT DOD PERSONNEL CHANGES WILL THE TERMINATION OF THESE OPERATIONS ON TAIWAN ENTAIL?

A: APPROXIMATELY 50-55 DOD PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN ADMINISTERING US CONTRACTS WILL BE RELOCATED BY THE TIME THESE OPERATIONS ON TAIWAN CEASE.

Q: HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE BEFORE A KOREAN FACILITY IS
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CAPABLE OF DOING THE WORK THAT IS NOW BEING DONE ON TAIWAN?

A: WE ARE NOT SURE. WE HOPE THAT THE KOREANS WILL BE READY TO ASSUME THE WORKLOAD IN A YEAR OR TWO.

Q: WHAT IMPACT WILL THE TRANSFER OF THESE CONTRACTS HAVE ON OUR ABILITY TO DEFEND TAIWAN?

A: NONE. THESE CONTRACTS PROVIDE FOR PERIODIC PROGRAMMED DEPOT MAINTENANCE AND NOT FOR SUPPORT OF COMBAT OPERATIONS.

Q: ARE THERE ANY OTHER MOVES CONTEMPLATED? WHAT ABOUT WAR RESERVE MATERIAL (WRM)?

A: WE ARE CONTINUOUSLY REVIEWING OUR MILITARY POSTURE ON TAIWAN AND MAKING ADJUSTMENTS AS NECESSARY. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR OWN MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO SPECULATE ON OTHER CHANGES THAT MIGHT OCCUR. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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